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RECOGNIZING TIMOTHY HUEBNER
OF RHODES COLLEGE 2004 TEN-
NESSEE PROFESSOR OF THE
YEAR

HON. HAROLD E. FORD, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 2004

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Timothy Huebner of Memphis as he is named 2004 Tennessee Professor of the Year by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

A hands-on historian with varied experiences and an abiding devotion to his profession, Professor Huebner has rendered distinguished service as a book review editor for the American Journal of Legal History, an advisory board member for Tennessee's history online discussion list, and as a Co-editor for Studies in the Legal History of the South Series; however, Huebner's tenure as a Professor of History at Rhodes College (a position he has held since 1995) is his defining position.

With an intellectual curiosity fed by research and a passion for helping students make complex issues clear, Professor Huebner has worked to find a balance between teaching and research. During his tenure at Rhodes College, Mr. Huebner has found that balance by devoting time to helping students write substantive research papers, supervising honors research papers, and more recently, serving as Founder and Director of the Rhodes Institute for Regional Studies. The Rhodes Institute is an innovative, interdisciplinary summer program that engages top undergraduates in research in the Memphis and Mississippi Delta region.

The Rhodes Institute brings a select group of students and faculty together for eight weeks: two weeks in a faculty-designed seminar on regional studies; five weeks engaged in independent research, interspersed with weekly individual and group meetings; one final week presenting their work. Under the supervision of a faculty mentor, each student produces an 8,000–10,000 word research paper that is published and distributed to the local community. This Institute and Professor Huebner's efforts have put Rhodes College on the map as a research institution and connected students to the Memphis community.

Huebner's selection as Tennessee Professor of the Year further highlights a career of service to his students, Rhodes College, and the Memphis community. Professor Huebner's more noteworthy accomplishments include his initiation into Omicron Delta Kappa in 2004, the recognition of the Rhodes Institute's website by the Council of Independent Colleges in 2003, his initiation into Phi Beta Kappa in 1988, his publication of eight articles and book chapters in scholarly publications, his fifty-five essays in encyclopedias and reference volumes, his twenty-five book reviews, and ten scholarly paper presentations at invited academic lectures.

For the good work he has had in the lives of countless youth, Mr. Speaker, I would ask

that you join me in honoring my friend and a friend to higher education, Mr. Timothy Huebner.

ON THE HORIZON: WORKERS'
BENEFITS BEING ROBBED

HON. NICK J. RAHALL, II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 2004

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I have always believed that, in America, hard work leads to reward. I grew up in a family that inspired me by example to work hard, to be fair, and to be loyal. They are values worth instilling in future generations. They are concepts that, I believe, set our Nation apart and above the rest of the world.

Increasingly, however, these American ideals are being swept aside in the corporate chase for the almighty dollar, and it does not bode well for the future of our country.

In recent months, the media in my State have been running stories about a series of court cases concerning Horizon Natural Resources—the Nation's fourth largest coal company. The once robust company was ailing financially and it was seeking protection through the bankruptcy codes. It is the kind of story that might normally engender sympathy. But how this company went about trying to protect itself wipes away any semblance of pity.

Horizon went after its employees, current and past. It went after their benefits, including their health care. In a cold and callous act, Horizon Natural Resources went to court and asked a judge to allow it to abandon its obligations to those men and women who had labored long and hard in the mines and coal-processing facilities to earn an honest living for themselves and the boys in suits.

In a final, appalling decision in September, a federal judge gave the "all clear" to Horizon to use bankruptcy loopholes to turn its back on its workers. Armed with that decision, Horizon took years of the hard work and the loyalty of thousands of employees and their families and heartlessly tossed it all out the courtroom window.

As a result, Horizon's mines and coal-processing facilities are enabled to continue to operate under new names, but its employees and retirees have suffered egregious losses, including, for some, the loss of their promised health care.

Such court decisions, to my mind, do not even vaguely resemble justice. They make a mockery of the word. Moreover, they thwart the intent of Congress when enacting the Coal Act which was supposed to guarantee those health care benefits.

As a result of its courtroom victories, Horizon is not only permitted to chuck its obligations to ensure certain benefits for its own employees, it is able to dump its liabilities on already financially strained benefit plans that provide for thousands of other retirees and their beneficiaries. Benefit plans, I might add, that are largely being financed by other coal companies.

As such, the Horizon "bankruptcy" decision resulted in several bad decisions that may have long-term, far-reaching implications for benefits and employer obligations under the

Coal Act, including the level of benefits that are required to be provided. In handing down such a poorly considered decision, one federal judge set off a domino effect that will also cost numerous companies that are playing by the rules.

This is exactly the type of egregious corporate behavior the Coal Act sought to address. It is wrong. It goes against the American grain. It turns on its head the ideals of hard work and loyalty and fairness.

This series of court decisions cannot be allowed to stand. In response, today I, along with West Virginia Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER, are introducing legislation to seek a remedy to this situation. Our bill will make clear that the benefits and obligations mandated by the Coal Act cannot be modified by the bankruptcy courts. It will prevent other companies from attempting to skirt the Coal Act through bankruptcy, and help to provide more stability to already over-burdened benefit plans and those families who depend on them.

Moreover, our bill will send a message that financial bankruptcy is not an excuse for moral bankruptcy, and that loyalty and hard work are worthy ideals still valued in America today.

RECOGNIZING CITIZENS OF OTIS,
KANSAS

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 2004

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the selfless efforts of the citizens of Otis, Kansas in their work to keep ambulance service available to their community.

A little more than two months ago, this community's emergency medical service was in danger of closing due to a lack of emergency medical technicians. After more than 30 years, Otis and the surrounding area was looking at the unfortunate reality of having no local ambulance service. This loss could have been devastating to this community of 325 people. The response time for an ambulance run in Otis is five to eight minutes. Ambulance response time from the next closest community, which is 15 miles away, would have been a minimum of 20 minutes. In rural America, having access to local ambulance service can mean the difference between life and death.

Fortunately, six individuals saw the effect this would have on their community and stepped forward to help. These individuals are taking EMT training and will volunteer their time to keep the Otis EMS alive. After seeing the outpouring of support, two other former volunteers also agreed to return to the service. In addition, two new volunteers—a registered nurse and an EMT—have made themselves available to go on ambulance runs when needed.

Because of the following individuals, the Otis EMS will remain open: Bruce Adamson; Mary Adamson; Jerry Dirks; Marsha Hinds; Mike Sharkey; Tara Stieben; Mike Bahr; Teri Bahr; Mark Brack; Candace Demory; Margaret Gary; Shane Konzem; Shayla Koochel; Virginia Landers; Karen Maier; Roger Mohr; Robert Newton; Eric Royer; Everett Royer; Ellen Schriener; Kent Schriener; James Sheldon; Bruce Swob; Mandy Urban; Don Weide.

Thanks to their team effort, this close-knit community will continue to have that lifeline to the health care services they need. Everett Royer, a current EMS volunteer, noted, "it gives us a little bit of hope."

All across the state of Kansas are stories just like this one. Of neighbors helping neighbors, not because they have to, but because they want to. Because it's the right thing to do. Their efforts deserve our support and recognition.

Citizens throughout the First Congressional District of Kansas are working together to enhance the quality of life in their communities. Preservation of the Otis EMS is a success story that gives all of us in rural America "a little bit of hope."

FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES ITS 80TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 2004

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, November 11, 2004 marked the 80th anniversary of the Fleet Reserve Association whose original charter was issued on that date in 1924 at Philadelphia, PA. Known by the acronym, FRA, the association is the oldest and largest professional military organization representing men and women serving in or retired from the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard.

FRA grew out of a need for an organization to safeguard sailor's rights and benefits. The idea for organizing such an association stemmed from the earlier action of a small group of enlisted men, who pooled their monies in 1919, to send two senior enlisted Navy chiefs from their ranks to Washington, DC to represent their viewpoint on pay legislation then under consideration in the U.S. Congress. The result of their testimony was a substantial enlisted pay increase the following year. These two pioneers were the first enlisted persons ever to testify before a congressional committee.

The Fleet Reserve Association derived its name from a program, the Fleet Naval Reserve, established by the Navy to separate sailors who had at least 16 or more years of active enlisted service but less than 30 for retirement purposes. Sailors could return to civilian life, receive retainer pay (in lieu of retirement pay), and be subject to immediate recall to active duty by the Secretary of the Navy until their combined service equaled 30 years.

FRA originally was formed in 1922. Its first successful endeavor occurred in 1923 when Congress overruled an unfavorable and inequitable judgment by the Comptroller General of the United States. The CG's decision had rejected the eligibility of certain enlisted personnel who had already transferred to the Fleet Naval Reserve and settled in the civilian community. The CG ruled that those holding commissions in WWI could not count their wartime commissioned or warrant service to qualify for transfer to the Fleet Naval Reserve. The FRA effort saved any number of enlisted sailors from returning to active duty to make up time served in the commissioned ranks.

Since its inception, FRA has produced an enviable record of representing enlisted men

and women of the Sea Services. In the 1930s, the Association authored two legislative proposals that were signed into law by then-President Herbert Hoover. One law banished a requirement that Fleet Reservists and other enlisted retirees pay 75 cents for rations while hospitalized in government treatment facilities. The other authorized the payment of death gratuities to the estate of Fleet Reservists who perished while recalled to active duty. In 1937, an FRA proposal to authorize commissary privileges to military widows was enacted into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Two years later, FRA's efforts to restore reenlistment allowances (bonuses) succeed when the President signed the legislation into law.

For the next five decades FRA racked up success after legislative success on behalf of its members and others, including all uniformed personnel of the armed services. Its "Hospital Rights" study led to the creation of the Civilian Health Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS) in 1966. Almost immediately thereafter, the Association financed a study of the military's survivor benefit program. The result of the study, entitled "Widow's Equity," led Congress to the 1972 adoption of the Uniformed Services Survivor Benefit Program (USSBP).

In the late 1970s and early 1990s FRA concentrated on protecting the rights of its membership. Much of its work was devoted to preserving the status quo for many of the benefits available to military personnel. FRA shared a major role in defeating an overhaul of the uniformed services retirement system and the proposed unionization of the armed forces. It targeted the defeat of a proposed plan to phase out funding for military commissaries, petitioned Congress not to adopt the former spouses' protection act, and joined as a founding member of The Military Coalition leading to the repeal of the reductions in cost of living adjustments (COLA) for military retirees and their survivors.

FRA published a pay study in 1999 that led to a major victory in obtaining targeted pay hikes for mid-grade enlisted personnel in 2001. It also authored the first legislation introduced that eventually led to the repeal of the 1986 military retirement system (REDUX), and urged the Navy to authorize sea pay for junior enlisted personnel.

In addition to its award-winning legislative advocacy work, the Association encourages participation in community activities wherever its 300-plus branches are located throughout the United States and overseas. FRA also conducts an annual scholarship program and awarded nearly \$90,000 to deserving students in 2004. Its Americanism Essay Contest is highly successful awarding more than \$75,000 to students each year. The Association also generously supports a number of recognition awards for outstanding uniformed personnel of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. The Association is recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs as a veterans' service organization, and employs a full time Veterans Service Officer who has the authority to assist any veteran in filing a claim or representing them before the Board of Veterans Appeals.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have been a part of the Association's efforts to serve the men and women of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. At the Association's request I introduced the first proposal in the House to

repeal the military's REDUX retirement program, to provide a targeted pay increase for mid-career enlisted personnel, and an amendment to the Coast Guard authorization bill to authorize the Commandant of the Coast Guard to speak his mind before members of Congress in the same manner as that of the other service chiefs; all of which have been enacted in law. There are others issues related to both military personnel and veterans that FRA and I will continue to work, most of which I plan to sponsor again in the 109th Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Fleet Reserve Association for its eight decades of representing our men and women of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. May its success in effectively serving active duty, reserve, and retired enlisted personnel, as well as those in the commissioned ranks, sustain the FRA through many more years of loyalty, protection, and service—not only to its members but to the U.S. Navy, the Marine Corps, the Coast Guard and the United States of America.

ON THE SUCCESS OF THE X-43A

HON. WILLIAM M. THOMAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 2004

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the men and women of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Dryden Flight Research Center and Langley Research Center for the record-breaking flight of the X-43A research vehicle on November 16, 2004. During the flight, the scramjet-powered X-43A flew successfully at record speed approaching Mach 10, almost ten times the speed of sound, as it raced across the sky above the Pacific Ocean. The Dryden Flight Research Center at Edwards Air Force Base, where the mission originated, is in my district. Earlier this year I visited Dryden and met with the men and women involved in the program and I share their excitement about this successful flight.

Supersonic combustion ramjets, or scramjets, offer safer and more affordable options for high-speed flights, as well as more airplane-like operations, than traditional rocket powered vehicles. Much of the information scientists have about scramjets has come from computer-generated models. The goal of this program was to provide actual flight data for a scramjet engine.

This was the third and final flight of NASA's Hyper-X Program to explore alternative power sources for space access vehicles. It was also the fastest flight, breaking the record of the second flight, which reached speeds near Mach 7. The Guinness Book of World Records named the X-43A the fastest air-breathing aircraft when it reached speeds of over 5,000 MPH during the March 27, 2004 flight. Only eight months later, the Guinness World Record book needs revising already; the X-43A is still the fastest, but now it has flown almost 7,000 MPH.

The X-43A took off from Edwards attached to a B-52 bomber. This was the last research flight for the B-52, which has been used successfully for many historic research efforts at Dryden. At around 2:30 PM local time, the X-